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**The Proceedings
of the
Unitarian Historical Society**

VOLUME III

PART I

**Liberty and Liberals
Four Hundred Years Ago**

GEORGE LINCOLN BURR

**Socinian Propaganda in Germany
Three Hundred Years Ago**

EARL M. WILBUR

1933

**25 Beacon Street
Boston, Massachusetts**

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LIBERALS AND LIBERTY FOUR HUNDRED YEARS AGO

GEORGE LINCOLN BURR

SIX months ago American Unitarians commemorated the birth four hundred years ago of two little books. By the well-chosen pen of Dr. Wilbur we recalled to our memories how then a young Spaniard, one Michael Servetus, put forth for the first time views savoring of those we now call Unitarian. But not in the history of speculative theology alone does Michael Servetus deserve remembering. In that of religious liberty as well his books and he are landmarks. Twenty years ago, speaking in Boston to my fellows of the American Historical Association, I tried to show that his death in Geneva in 1553 is our best date for the ending of the Middle Ages.¹ For that heretic-burning at Protestant hands proved the culminating point of the long effort in Christendom to realize by earthly force a State of God. I have hoped to point out some day more fully than has yet been done how the Christian world protested against that triumph of theocracy. But that protest had, too, its antecedents; and to-day I want to glance with you at what we can detect of these in that eventful year 1531-32 when Michael Servetus published his first books. What were the perils that Liberals then faced? And what in protest could Liberals then say?

It was the morrow of the Diet of Augsburg. The "national council" promised the German princes by the half-German prince they had made Holy Roman Emperor and so head of Christendom had now been held, and the leaders of

¹ My paper, "Anent the Middle Ages," may be found in the *American Historical Review*, vol. 16, pp. 710-726.

German heresy, laying before him the creeds of their new churches, had pledged themselves to bar all further change. As for the official church of Rome and of the Empire, her attitude toward religious freedom had for more than a thousand years been fixed. In their earlier years the Christians had themselves taught tolerance; and to them it is ascribed by the historian of Roman religion that when at last the Emperor Constantine granted to all faiths equality he could base his act on their conviction and his that the God of heaven himself wished all religion free.¹ It does not follow that to Constantine this freedom of religion meant freedom too for heresy. Already the Christian jurist Tertullian, who wrote "it is not for religion to compel religion," had written also that "heretics should be coerced to their duty, not enticed, for obstinacy needs rigor, not persuasion"; and there is much in the acts of Constantine to suggest that to his soldier mind a heresy was not a new religion, but only insubordination to an old. If after him imperial policy for a few years wavered, the edicts of Theodosius, another soldier on the imperial throne, soon left no room for doubt; and now for more than a thousand years heresy had been, to state as well as church, the highest of crimes—treason to God himself. To what thus touched the sovereignty of God the law of the Roman world, as codified under Justinian, gave its opening book; and its initial article, "Of the Supreme Trinity and of the Catholic Faith," forbade that these should be so much as publicly discussed. Now, too, since the thirteenth century, the Church had had her special court to deal with this high crime, the Holy Inquisition. She had in this court only to condemn, and everywhere the secular power enforced with death her decision. True, that court had found as yet

¹ "Pendant toute la durée de la domination romaine, je ne vois pas un seul sage, fût-il un sceptique, comme Pline l'ancien, un libre penseur dégagé de tous les préjugés, comme Sénèque, un philosophe honnête et doux, comme Marc-Aurèle, qui ait paru soupçonner qu'on pourrait accorder un jour des droits égaux à toutes les religions de l'empire. Seuls les chrétiens l'ont pensé et l'ont dit."—Boissier, *La fin du paganisme*, i, p. 57.

but a cold welcome in Germanic lands.¹ But there too now inquisitors were busy; and, if the heretic were of the clergy, he could of course be summoned to Rome. With Martin Luther the Church's action was slow; but, as even Protestant scholars now see, there was no paltering. The posting of his rebellious theses in 1517 had brought swift accusation; and his trial had taken thenceforward its slow but steady course at Rome. The heretic had refused, indeed, to appear there; and when, in 1520, the Church's condemnation had been pronounced, the rest had to be left to her imperial lieutenant. But than that lieutenant, Charles of Spain and Austria, no Emperor was ever less disposed to leave a heretic unpunished. For Luther it was a triumph that his cause could be heard before a German Diet and that he could make his own answer. But from Charles that answer won no friendship, no delay. The imperial edict of outlawry and death against the heretic and his followers was duly issued, and in Charles's own Netherlands it went forthwith into effect. If elsewhere the execution of that edict had to wait, it was because Charles of Hapsburg had more pressing errands. Such a trifle must not put off the chastisement of his Castilian towns or chill the loyalty of his German vassals while he could use their aid in settling accounts with the French king or fending off the Turk from Austria. Moreover, as churchmen loved always to foretell, heresy was soon breeding revolution. By 1524 the peasants were making Gospel texts their excuse for evading tithes and taxes, and slow German burghers were rallying to prince and prelate for their repression. Charles could well hold up for a time his edict, and, even when in 1526 that period of grace ran out, could accept the compromise that, till the promised Council of the Church, each petty German sovereign should as to religion "so rule and hold as he hoped and trusted himself to answer to God and to Imperial Majesty."

¹ For the history of the Inquisition in Germany long hoped from Joseph Hansen we still wait; but the footnotes to his translation of Lea's chapter (*Geschichte der Inquisition im Mittelalter*, vol. ii, chap. 6) give some hints of what he has learned. Much too is added by Paul Fredericq's researches on the Inquisition in the Netherlands.

Luther himself, too, sobered by responsibility, seemed fast forgetting this particular error, of those condemned as his by the Pope's bull, that "heretic-burning is against the will of the Holy Spirit." These words he could hardly take back; but, now that on the Saxon throne as his lord there sat a prince committed to his views and looking to him for guidance, it grew clear to him that to a sovereign's religious duty there are few limits. A Christian prince, he now taught, must decide for his subjects what is the true religion and must permit no other. If they refuse it or distort it, he must punish them—punish them, not for heresy, but for sedition. Heresy is a spiritual thing and thoughts are "toll-free"; they may *think* what they will. But, if they *teach* aught that shocks the conscience of the prince, he must punish them for blasphemy. He must require, too, in order that his subjects may all know the truth, their faithful attention to religious teaching in church and school. Thus did Luther work out that compromise of "whose the region his the religion," *cujus regio ejus religio*. Against the peasants who made the Gospel teach revolution none wrote more hotly than he, or more urged force in their repression. To him all who taught disturbing doctrines were "fanatics"—*Schwärmer*. Even the order-loving Swiss were to him, because of their rationalism, both fanatics and blasphemers.¹

When, therefore, in 1529 the Emperor at last felt it safe to proceed with vigor against the German heretics, his first step was easy. Already they were divided, and he could count on using the Lutherans against the others. Doubtless that memorable German Diet that in the spring of 1529 assembled at Spires is by most of us remembered for the "Protest"—a protest of the Lutheran princes and towns which was thenceforward to furnish their Catholic opponents with a

¹ With the evolution of Luther's attitude I deal much more fully in "Anent the Middle Ages." Since, in 1901, the careful study of this was begun by Köhler in his *Reformation und Ketzerprozess* much has been written on it and with growing agreement. The latest analysis is by an American scholar, Professor Roland H. Bainton, in the *Harvard Theological Review* for 1929 (vol. 22, pp. 107-149), and is now the best key to the whole literature. I here tell only what is needed to make intelligible the situation in 1529-30.

courteous name by which to call them: *die Protestanten*, the Protestants. But let us not forget that it was a protest only against the high-handed annulment of the religious compromise of 1526—a protest on behalf, not of the subject's freedom to choose his faith, but of his sovereign's freedom to dictate it. That Protest, though not accepted, was followed by the tacit continuance for a time of what the Lutherans claimed. But what to the Catholic majority of that Diet must have seemed much more important was the law of death enacted by Catholics and Lutherans jointly, on April the 17th, three days before the submission of the Protest, against the extremer heretics. The Swiss, it is true, were not yet to suffer its harshest penalties. Among the Lutheran princes were some, like the Hessian landgrave, too wise to connive at the sacrifice of such allies. For the present it seemed enough to provide that the Swiss views—"certain teachings and practices as to the sacrament of the body and blood of our Lord"—be excluded from Germany. But, for all others (including, of course, all those whose views resembled those now held by those we call "religious liberals"), in order to end "the frightful new doctrines and sects of all sorts" and "to avert all further apostasy, unrest, dissension, and annoyance," there is embodied in the "recess," or final decree, of the Diet an edict which has been called, I think with justice, the harshest heresy law in Christian history.

But, I hear some learned hearer exclaim, "That was only the law against the Anabaptists." Yes; and that is doubtless why so few students of the period have given it the attention it deserves. How slight a queerness in dress or doctrine suffices to dull the edge of our interest! But do those who draw aside their skirts know what in 1529 an "Anabaptist" was? No name, perhaps, has orthodoxy, Catholic and Protestant, so unjustly blackened. Anabaptists were not the warring peasants: that error had already been refuted. Nor could the name Anabaptist yet suggest those crazed folk at Münster who a half-dozen years later scandalized the Chris-

tian world—and nobody more than their fellow Anabaptists. Nor did Anabaptist mean, as scholars still are too prone to assume, one who held strange views of baptism or laid particular emphasis on that rite. As for immersion, the earliest Anabaptists did not immerse, nor did many later ones; and, where practiced, that mode in itself caused no objection. How, then, came such a name to be attached to them? And what did it now mean? Let me tell the tale.

In 1529 the name Anabaptist was scarcely four years old. In January of 1525, at Zürich, then as now the leading city of the Swiss, a little handful of religious radicals, desperate because they found themselves unable to win the reforming leader, Ulrich Zwingli, to their ideal of a community for the saints alone, resolved to form one for themselves and then to initiate each other into it by a baptism. This was not to them a *re*-baptism; for, like many another radical group in that day of searching the Scriptures, they denied that what was done to them as babes was really baptism. To the new rite they attached no great importance. Nor was it striking in form: they themselves described it as a "sprinkling," and the water for their first wholesale baptism was brought in a milk-pail. Nor did they take for their group a name. The name Anabaptist was given by their foes, and against their constant protest. The first to use it seems to have been Ulrich Zwingli, and why he chose it is not hard to guess. Denouncing from his pulpit these radicals, he declared, so they themselves report, that they ought to be beheaded *in pursuance of the imperial laws*. "Do you hesitate to punish them? According to the imperial laws such heretics should be beheaded."¹ What imperial laws did he mean? The laws against anabaptists—rebaptizers.

There were such laws—laws more than a thousand years old. Old puritanic parties in the early church—the Montanists, the Donatists—to punish those who fell away during the persecutions or were led off into heresies had made

¹ See their *Geschichtsbücher* (in the *Fontes Rerum Austriacarum*, xliii—1883), pp. 20, 21, and Hubmaier, *Von dem Kindertauf* (1526).

rebaptism a condition of their restoration to the church. Christian Emperors, siding with a milder policy and tiring of the stubbornness of these rigorists, had put forth edicts punishing such rebaptism with death. Between those rebaptizers and the Swiss radicals there was, of course, no historical connection; all that Zwingli himself urged was that the movements were "not unlike" in their causes, and that each brought about a quarrel, a division—which is what he understands by a "heresy."¹ It was for this, then—their attempt to form a separate church, using rebaptism as a means—that Zwingli named them Anabaptists, and so could threaten them with death by imperial law. That threat, indeed, he speedily forgot. The recognition at Zürich of imperial law would have hazarded his own neck—and many others; and the Zürich council forthwith enacted penalties of its own for its radicals—imprisonment, exile, then (1526) death by drowning. These local laws did not, as Zwingli had done, use the term heresy; and Zwingli himself soon shied from the word Anabaptist. Finding that one of the Fathers (Gregory of Nazianzum) had jestingly dubbed these rebaptizers Catabaptists (that is, as Zwingli understood him, misbaptizers), Catabaptists they were to him thenceforward when he wrote in Latin. But, whether thus to the learned they were Anabaptists or Catabaptists—Baptists-Up or Baptists-Down—in the German of common folk they were, and despite their protests, "Wiedertäufer," rebaptizers.

What Zwingli resented in them was not a theological error. It was its practical consequence. He had himself once shared—as had Luther and others of the reformers—their doubts as to whether the baptism of infants is taught by the New Testament. But, when these reformers had seen

¹ "Thirteen hundred years ago, too," so he writes in his *Von der Taufe, von der Wiedertaufe und von der Kindertaufe* (May, 1525) "rebaptizing caused much disturbance. . . . The cause, too, of our Anabaptists is not unlike the causes of that rebaptizing. For in those days there were many disturbers and dividers, just as now too every headstrong crank starts a group of his own; and the bishops (that is to say, the ministers or pastors) came together to hunt out in God's word what ground there might be for these strange views. And, when they found that these wranglers were disputing for their notions (queer and silly enough they were, needing no description here) only out of willfulness, not for their truth to God's word, they warned them soundly. Whoever thereafter clung to his crankiness was shunned as a sectary, a partisan or divider—what men call a heretic."

how the usage of the centuries had made infant baptism the very basis of a Christian community, they saw no way to let it go. Their critical consciences found quiet in the assumption that the circumcision required for Hebrew children had among Christians been replaced by baptism. Since the fourth Christian century it had been demanded by imperial law of every parent. On it and on the pledge made for the babe by its sponsors rested all the claims of Church and State. By it one became a Christian—do we not still call it a christening (i. e. a Christianing)—and since Justinian it had been the basis of citizenship as well. To this day, among Catholics, one can not even be a heretic unless one has been baptized. To exempt their children from baptism, as these Swiss radicals sought to do, was to free them from their social and political obligations; and to rebaptize themselves was to form a new and rival community inside the old. So, at least, Zwingli conceived their purpose. Anabaptist (*Wiedertäufer*) to him meant Separatist. Over and over he took pains to make this clear; and that is what the name did mean to those who learned it from him.¹ And since, meaning thus any Separatist, the name soon ceased to suggest any thought of baptism, they used it as well for the Saxon radicals who had opposed Luther and whose views were beginning to infect the South—though these Northerners

¹ E. g. to Bullinger, already his lieutenant and soon to be his successor. The radicals urged Zwingli, he later writes, that the godly "should separate themselves from the others in this city and form a pure church and community of the true children of God, who would have the spirit of God and be ruled or guided by him. But Zwingli replied that he liked not at all such a separation and division. . . . And, when both sides had disputed much and long, Zwingli's opponents saw that with him they would not gain their end and considered how in other wise to bring about their separation and to set up a separated church. So they began to attack infant baptism and to urge that, since this is no true baptism, they had not been baptized, and that the believers must let themselves be rebaptized into a holy community of God. And from this doctrine of theirs it came that men began to call Baptists and Anabaptists those whom hitherto some had called Spirituals. Zwingli, however, saw well from what the rebaptism came and for what they wished to use it—namely, for the separation (*zur absünderung*).” It was, of course, only of Anabaptism in the sense of Separatism that Bullinger could make the oft-quoted statement that the Swiss radicals “sucked their Anabaptism from Münster.” For Bullinger himself tells us that Münster held water-baptism of small account; and, though he denied that infant baptism was from God, believed that a rebaptism should be spiritual and did not himself rebaptize. Moreover, it is clear from the letter of the Swiss radicals (5 Sept. 1524) which opened their relations with Münster that they already taught adult baptism only and were not sure of his agreement. (For all this see Bullinger, *Der Wiedertäufer Ursprung*, etc., 1561, and the letter to Münster, first printed by Cornelius in his *Geschichte des Münsterischen Aufbruchs*, ii, p. 240 ff., now well translated by Rauschenbusch in the *American Journal of Theology*, ix, p. 91 ff.).

were not rebaptizers and though their belief in violence horrified the non-resistant Swiss Anabaptists.

Not to the Saxon north did Swiss Anabaptism first spread, but into the Catholic lands of the Hapsburgs, adjoining everywhere along the upper Rhine the lands of the Swiss; and here too the name soon included all religious groups outside the churches of the various governments. In this inclusive name were presently lost what anywhere had survived of the "Spirituals" or "Evangelicals" or "Brothers"—Waldensian, Bohemian, or Mystical in origin—whose history is now so shadowy and so disputed, but who were certainly one source of German separatism. And, from now on, every new religious group, every isolated religious thinker, was likely to be classed as Anabaptist and looked on as somehow a traitor to all established religion—till, especially among the non-Catholic, the name of Anabaptist and that of heretic came to be almost synonyms. Even Calvin, who had much other use for the latter term, says of the Anabaptists that "this vermin differs from all other groups of heretics in that it does not err in certain points alone, but has given rise to a whole sea of foolish notions—so that one can hardly find an Anabaptist without some wild idea of his own." And lest any here may fondly dream that among this riff-raff were not found the views now dear to Liberals, let me point out to you how the judicial Bullinger, listing a little later the varieties he knows of Anabaptists, after enumerating a dozen common sorts, among whom he can now include those mad folk at Münster, adds a thirteenth and culminating class called by him the "Horrible" Anabaptists and among these describes those who now bear the names of Unitarian and Universalist.¹

How a non-Catholic theologian, concerned for his particular Ark of Salvation, should find convenient a comprehensive name like Anabaptist for all religious rebels is clear enough. But why should Catholics, to whom all others were

¹ For Calvin's utterance see his *Op.* (in the *Corpus Reformatorum*), vii, p. 53; for Bullinger's "Grüewenliche Töüfer," his *Der Widertöüfferen ursprung*, bk. ii, cap. 12.

heretics alike, find use for such a name? That is to forget that all but Separatists had their protectors. Even the Emperor was till 1529 bound by the compromise of "whose the region, his the religion." Let us glance back at his lands along the upper Rhine. A Catholic should, of course, send heresy to the Church's courts; but here the Church's courts had scarce found entrance. Her inquisitors had in just this region, indeed, had great success in bringing in witch-hunting; but it was by furnishing the secular courts with a textbook and a code of procedure. Now the name Anabaptist served as good a turn. For here more swiftly than in most German lands imperial law was gaining vogue, and in it were the edicts against anabaptism. They condemned it, not as a heresy, but as a criminal act—a crime whose penalty was death, and with no need of trial by the Church. True, those edicts, as we now see, were meant for no such rebaptizers as these; but the historical study of law was yet in its infancy. Was it not of the very essence of heresy that the Devil thus forever brings back in new and more seductive forms the errors long ago refuted by the Fathers? So, at least, was just then teaching Friar Conrad of Luxemburg in the standard "Catalogue of Heretics." Johann Brenz, the Swabian reformer, whose advice was in 1528 sought by Nuremberg, protested indeed that to these simple folk, whose blameless lives he personally knew, the old imperial laws did not apply. But his protest had no weight with Catholic princes; least of all with Ferdinand of Austria, brother and regent of the Emperor Charles, who already in June, 1524, had leagued himself with the Bavarian princes and the South German prelates for the enforcement of Charles's edict of Worms. That the compromise of 1526 delayed. But not for Separatists; and Ferdinand's fierce edict of 1527 (20 Aug.) tells how, beside the Lutheran errors therein condemned, there have now arisen "new, terrible, unheard-of doctrines which because of their shameless blasphemy are not for us to reveal—among them that of anabaptism, though this act has been forbidden, not only by the Church, but centuries

ago by the imperial laws." Sharper yet was the edict put forth in 1528 (4 Jan.) by Charles himself through his Imperial Council. Substantially this it was that now in 1529 was made law for all Germany by the Diet of Spires. Let us look at it more closely.

"Inasmuch," it opens, "as there has lately arisen a new Sect of the Anabaptism, which is forbidden by imperial law and has for many centuries been condemned, and as this Sect, regardless of imperial mandate, grows ever stronger and more alarming, His Majesty, to fend off this serious evil and its results, and to preserve peace and unity in the Empire, hereby ordains: That each and every Anabaptist, man or woman, of responsible age, be put from natural life to death by fire or sword"—the men were burned, the women drowned—"without prior churchly trial." Nor may they (I now abridge) in any wise be let off; but, in case any shall forthwith confess, recant, and willingly bear penance and penalty therefor, and begs for mercy, he shall be shown it. All children must be brought for baptism. Nor may any give refuge to an Anabaptist on pain of outlawry (*Acht und Bann*). To this savage decree now add "unanimously" their signatures "the Electors, Princes, Prelates, and Estates" of all the Realm, and, say they, "we pledge ourselves to live up to this edict." So, too, in the main they did—some, like Philip of Hesse, had wisely absented themselves from the signing—and so well that, when a year later, in 1530, there came the great Diet of Augsburg, with the Emperor present in person, it was felt enough, as regarded the Swiss and the Anabaptists, to remind the Lutherans of this pledged co-operation. But at Augsburg there were submitted, and not alone by the Lutherans, but by the Swiss and by a dissenting group of South German towns, elaborate articles of faith, from which they engaged there should be no more departure. As for the Anabaptists, a contemporary estimates at two thousand the number already legally slain—among these most of their ministers.

The Diet of Augsburg, as is well known, did not bring

peace. Charles accepted no Confession of Faith, and above the heads of his heretic subjects his sword still dangled. When, in 1546, the long-threatened war came it looked for a time as if that sword would enforce submission. But, as everybody knows, the fortunes of war changed, and when, in 1555, another Diet of Augsburg at last brought compromise, the rival faiths were left substantially as that of 1530 had found them. The Confessions there rejected continued to define the creed of Lutherans and of Swiss; and, however local laws replaced the imperial, their spirit was much the same. When, in 1532, there was promulgated at last the long-awaited criminal code for the Empire, the Carolina, it contained, thanks to Lutheran influence, no clause as to heresy. But, though Lutherans preferred to punish as sedition or as blasphemy religious divergence, its penalty was nearly everywhere death; and, thanks to the name Anabaptist, even in Lutheran lands a court could safely use the imperial law.¹

And how about the Swiss? We have seen how Zwingli in 1525, declaring heresy to mean faction, not error, turned from thought of the old imperial laws to the legislation of the Zürich council. To that alliance, that fusion, of local church and local government, he remained thenceforward true; and his example was followed in the other Swiss cantons that turned from the old faith. The civil government, advised of course by its clergy, not only shaped the church and cared for its maintenance, but tolerated no other worship, "shut the mouths of God's foes," prevented sin. Its citizens must listen to the preaching it provided, its preachers take oath to preach only what it approved. All surviving Catholic usages must be abolished, and all who observe them must be fined. Anabaptists (and all but Catholics and Zwinglians were deemed Anabaptists) must recant or choose

¹ The Hessian laws, thanks to Philip's tolerance, were the mildest. But, even in Hesse, writes in 1582 the Hessian jurist Sawr, "the Anabaptists are by no means tolerated. When detected they must abandon their error or must sell their property and leave the land."

between exile and death.¹ Of the states we call Protestant, Zürich was earliest in use of the death penalty against dissenters (Jan. 1527), and perhaps sternest in its use; and that sternness grew. To the Diet of Augsburg, in 1530, her theologians asserted their loyalty to the one true church (which, of course, meant their repudiation of sects), and there can be no doubt that they approved, except as to themselves, the imperial law of 1529. Nay, in 1527, Zürich, Bern, and St. Gall, joined presently by Basel and Schaffhausen, had united in a common law against Anabaptists which bound their subjects to betray to justice all suspected of that crime. Their teachers and preachers and the leaders of their groups must at once be drowned. The rest are to be warned, and, if stubborn, imprisoned. When released they must swear to have no more to do with the sect, and, if false to this oath, shall be drowned. And when, in 1535, the sectaries still multiplying, the Zürich council again asked advice from its clergy, that body, now since Zwingli's death (1531) led by Bullinger, replied that this Anabaptism, though sometimes only the delusion of ignorant and simple-hearted folk, is sometimes "a great open, scandalous, and insincere blasphemy, dishonoring God, despising Holy Writ, insulting God and the Holy Trinity, denying either the divinity or the humanity of Christ, and belittling, spurning, or distorting the doctrines on which our salvation rests." It is better that its teachers be slain than that they lead many into damnation. If, after being patiently instructed, they give no hope of betterment, they must be prevented from poisoning others and must be dealt with like other criminals (each according to the circumstances of his case), in accordance with the laws, divine, secular, and imperial—the laws, that is, of the Bible, of Zürich, and of the Empire.

¹ Of the Zwinglian view and its development I must not here say more. One may now use the monograph of Kreutzer, *Zwingli's Lehre von der Obrigkeit* (1909), and Alfred Farners *Die Lehre von Kirche und Staat bei Zwingli* (1931), with Köhler's review of it (*Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung*, Kan. Abt. xx, p. 669 ff.). But one must not omit the unfriendly pages of the Catholic Paulus, in his *Protestantismus und Toleranz im 16. Jahrhundert* (1911), and the Separatist Thudichum, in his *Die deutsche Reformation, 1517-37* (1907-9).

That is a significant phrase, that final one. Now that Unitarianism is to be feared, the laws of Zürich no longer suffice; and the imperial law chiefly in thought must be that of 1529.

Let it not surprise us that this type of heresy was counted the most desperate. It seemed blasphemy, and blasphemy was now the highest crime known to the courts,—a crime reputed to bring down on a whole region the wrath of God. The current definition of blasphemy, familiar to all from an oft-enforced law meant to curb profane swearing and wanton irreverence, was “If any ascribe to God what does not beseem God or with his words robs God of what is his due”—and so it now ran in the Caroline code, where the extreme penalty, as in the law of Moses, was death. The catechisms, familiar to all from their childhood, enlarged upon this in dealing with the Third Commandment; and great was the general dread of any liberty taken with the name or the attributes of God. Of this dread and of the law against blasphemy Luther had availed himself when he felt a need of the courts to aid him in repression; and by including in “blasphemy” much more than wanton insult to religion he made that law almost a substitute for one against heresy. “Manifest blasphemy is it,” he wrote in 1530, “to teach what is contrary to any recognized article of the faith—one clearly grounded in Scripture and believed by all Christendom, such as children are taught in the Creed—as, for example, to teach that Christ is not God or that he did not die for our sins, or to deny the resurrection or eternal life or hell.” Thus even Luther, to illustrate what blasphemy is, thought first of what robs Christ of his attributes; and it was easy to look on those who speculate as to the Godhead as a sort of super-heretics. The Roman see itself, revising a few years later its Lord’s-Supper bull, which on Maundy Thursday of every year reminded the faithful of the notorious heresies to be avoided, and which thus far had named no modern heretic but Luther, now substituted for his name “the Anabaptists” and “the Trinitarians”—meaning by the

latter, of course, those who question the dogma of the Trinity.

I trust I have made it clear, then, that by this time not only all Catholics, but all orthodox Protestants—the Lutherans, that is, and the Swiss—were ready to punish arrant heresy (though heresy they might not call it) with death; and that to all these the most arrant heresy (though they might punish it as faction, as sedition, or as blasphemy) was that to which we modern Liberals are still most prone. But from the attitude of the Protestant leaders toward even that heresy and its punishment to the attitude so soon to be championed by Calvin and defended by Beza the step was still a long one.

Such, four hundred years ago, were the limits of religious liberty. Who protested? And how liberal were then the Liberals?

Not all were among the so-called Anabaptists. There was Erasmus, with his dwindling group of fellow Humanists, trimming between the rival orthodoxies. Great was liberty's debt to them; but they were survivals from a time more free. Trimming had grown a ticklish business, now that the war of dogma was so hot; and martyrdom was not their forte. When in 1529, just as the edict of Spire had committed Catholic and Lutheran alike to the repression of the sects by force, Erasmus learned that his old friend Geldenhauer had put at the forefront of a pamphlet against the persecution his own censure of the Spanish inquisitors, he was in a fury. And with much reason; for not only was this without his consent, but the title-page so displayed his name that the pamphlet at first glance seemed his own. Forthwith he printed a reply maintaining that, though he had censured bigots, he had never justified heresy or opposed the death penalty for blasphemy or sedition; and so fiercely in this did he deal with Lutheran heresies and habits that the Strasburg clergy were stirred to defend them. Whereupon Erasmus in a fresh reply, tempering somewhat his wrath, admitted his pleas to theologians and princes for Christian

clemency and scored his critics, especially the Strasburgers and the Swiss, for their harshness to the Anabaptists. Yet when soon (1531) another admirer, the free-minded Franck, again quoted his words against persecution, so hotly did Erasmus protest to the Strasburg authorities against their permitting the publication of such a book that it cost Franck imprisonment and exile.

What, then, of Geldenhauer and Franck themselves? Let me say first a word about what liberty owes to those not Liberals. I suspect that tolerance, if not liberty, owes more of actual advance to those who look with friendly eyes from more conservative folds than to her thorough-going champions. The leader who has a line beyond which he clearly will not go may take with him to that line more than would follow another so far; and from his fellow leaders he is sure of a better hearing. Often, too, a leader who like Luther recedes from the breadth of earlier years has meanwhile kindled others whose courage does not chill, or has committed himself for life by phrases of his generous youth. Sometimes, too, it is the earlier years that stay in the world's memory and are still fruitful. For a century now the Luther of history has been almost wholly the earlier Luther, he who seemed to stand for liberty; and by his story thousands have been nerved for heresy who never learned how later he repressed it. What, in the age we are studying, did not its Liberals owe to the Erasmian words of the younger Zwingli, to Brenz's vain protest against persecution, to the Strasburg refuge of the younger Bucer! And among those we call "the lesser reformers" how many somehow with their orthodoxy reconciled a breadth of view, a sympathy, a patience, and a tolerance that passed that of the overworked leaders. Such were a Capito, a Pellican, a Wolfgang Musculus; such, among the women of the Reformation, a Katharine Zell.

It is here, perhaps, that one should speak of Geldenhauer; for his tolerance did not make him a sectary.¹ Gerald Gelden-

¹ As "frei aller Secten" the Strasburg clergy in 1534 certified him to Philip of Hesse. (Lenz, *Briefwechsel Philipps*, i, p. 33.)

hauer (Noviomagus, Nijmegen-born, as he Latinized his name), a Netherland friend not only of Erasmus, but of Thomas More, whose *Utopia* he had helped see through the press, had begun his career as chaplain to Prince Charles, the later Emperor. But, as More says of him, he must blurt frankly out what Erasmus could insinuate, and he was already a religious exile when in 1526 the persecution drove his pen to fiery protest. First with the German princes gathered at Spires, then with Duke Charles of Gelders, lord of his Rhenish home, then with the Emperor himself, he pleaded against the abuse of the old laws against their subjects, whose crime was only their devotion to what they thought the truth. It was these pleas, reprinted together in 1529, to which he prefixed the passage from Erasmus. Silenced for a little by that scholar's wrath or his own poverty, he was in 1534 called by Philip of Hesse to a chair in the new university at Marburg, where already in 1535 he was urging his prince to patience and gentleness with the Anabaptists.¹ To Geldenhauer, till his death in 1542, Philip's exceptional tolerance was doubtless partly due.

But now, by most, belief in tolerance—"the sin of indifference," as Calvin called it—was deemed an Anabaptist heresy. Not, of course, that all Anabaptists were Liberals. Even Michael Servetus, progressive and lover of mankind though he was, I hesitate to call so. Not because his controversial manners were almost as bad as Calvin's; but because to me he seems essentially a man of dogma. Once, indeed, we hear him plead for tolerance; but he was then on trial for his life, and his words to me do not suggest an earlier advocacy. The Anabaptists included, of course, the "lunatic fringe" of the great reforming movement, and most of them, counted by the head, were doubtless what historians have preferred to call them—Radicals: simple-minded pietists or narrow-minded extremists. But among them, and from the first, were Liberals in the highest sense of that fine word. Witness Hans Denck — scholar, proof-reader,

¹ (Rommel, *Philipp*, ii, p. 240.)

schoolmaster, preacher, author, wandering "bishop" of these little knots of martyrs and freethinkers, but growing always in wisdom, in modesty, in self-control, advocate always of Christian love and Christian liberty; with his doubts as to Hell, as to Satan, as to the Trinity, as to the Church, as to the Bible, but with unshaken faith in the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Witness his friend and partner, Ludwig Hetzer, of whom Dr. Weis has just given us so illuminating a life. Witness Balthasar Hubmaier or Michael Sattler. All these had been swept off, however, before the years we study; and those whom I shall name must be but one or two.

First, then, a word of Caspar von Schwenckfeld. A Silesian nobleman whose deep piety turned him from a court career to seek at Wittenberg itself light on the new outlook, he was repelled by Luther's literalism and his growing intolerance and then found in South Germany a fertile seed-bed for his own more mystical faith. There, after 1527, one meets him everywhere, that knight of the free spirit—a courteous, kindly man, a trifle deaf and with the persistence of opinion so often characteristic of the hard of hearing. Driven out from Strasburg, Augsburg, Ulm, a homeless fugitive for a generation, he yet was everywhere welcomed by old friends and making new ones, everywhere leaving behind him not only a knot of disciples, but a disregard for form and dogma and a readiness to find true religion under any name. But, some will protest, Schwenckfeld was no Anabaptist. Wasn't he, then? Only the other day was published a first volume of the sources for Anabaptist history in Württemberg; and the editor, Bossert, includes all Schwenckfeldian records because, he says, to the courts the Schwenckfeldians were a sort of Anabaptists. Of course, as I have shown you, the name Anabaptist was a misnomer. Schwenckfeld was not even a Separatist. But he was a foe of infant baptism; and that was quite enough to convict him. Not the least of his services to liberty was this obscuring

of the limits of Anabaptism—this and his ready ear for all other heretics, even for Servetus and for Franck.¹

Of Sebastian Franck and of the book in which he quoted Erasmus let me now speak. That book, his "Bible of History," was no work of learning; but not less than that of Servetus does it red-letter for Liberals the year 1531. It is only a world-history, and in German for the common reader. Its first part, "from Adam to Christ," is followed (as one might expect from a German) by a chronicle of the Empire to his own day, and that by a chronicle of the Popes; and it is already clear that the author borrows his facts where he happens to find them, and that what interests him is not the facts, but his way of stating them and a mystical philosophy of history he works into them. But the startling thing is what follows: "a chronicle of the Roman heretics and of all their teachings, now banned and damned by the Roman church." His matter, indeed, is still largely borrowed, and from Friar Conrad of all men. But Friar Conrad is turned on his head; for the heretics are listed, not to condemn them, but honestly to give them a hearing. And among them now appear Augustine and Ambrose and Hilary and Jerome and all who seem to the author to have struck out new paths to truth—aye, and also the heretics of his own day, as he has known them: Erasmus and Luther and Zwingli, yes and Münzer and Hubmaier and Hans Denck and the Anabaptists as a whole, and on the views of each a fearless judgment of his own. A kindly judgment withal; "for to my mind," he writes, "the bounds of the kingdom of Christ are in our days drawn much too narrow." Nay, more: at the end of his list of heretics he adds "Verdicts of the Scriptures and of writers old and new as to what and who a heretic is, and whether he may justly be tortured and put to death." And again he quotes Erasmus, with the protests of Brenz and Odenbach. It was this little body of protests

¹ "Schwenckfeld," wrote Bucer to Blaurer (29 Dec. 1531), "was present at my lectures against the book of Servetus, and I hope he too disapproves it; but I do not know—for whatever we oppose he favors, or at least thinks it should be tolerated." Franck, who owed much to him, was often sheltered by the same roof.

that a quarter-century later formed a nucleus for that of Castellio against the execution of Servetus.

And who, then, was this Franck? University-trained, a preacher first Catholic, then Lutheran, then at Nuremberg in close touch with the sects, he had gone through the gamut of opinion to find himself an individualist. Schwenckfeld taught that in any church one might be a Christian; Franck's message was that to be a Christian one needs no church at all. An Anabaptist indeed (though he denied it), but with a difference: he would have no followers. Yet through those books of his—for none but Luther could write such German as he—his audience was great. That the rest of his life was spent in poverty or in hiding who can wonder?

Of another book that saw the light in 1531 I speak with more hesitation. It was that of Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa on "The Vanity of all Arts and Sciences." A strange scholar, this Agrippa, I confess, and something of a charlatan. Well-born, much-traveled, student in many lands, at last a physician—private physician to the powerful queen-mother of France and then to the yet more powerful Margaret of Parma, aunt of the Emperor Charles and regent of the Netherlands—he was rich in experience when at five and forty he freed his mind in this exposure of the frauds and follies of his time. A humanist, he had managed to hold a middle place between the faiths, and he feels free to scoff at everything. But of his earnestness there can hardly be question when he rails at the church's inquisitors for their eagerness to convict and burn a heretic, and at those especially who torture poor women into confession of witchcraft. Twice at Metz, while syndic there, he had saved from them such victims, and he knew whereof he spoke. That the source of such confessions was the torture, he first had thus the hardihood to maintain; and his protest brought suspicion of his being himself in league with Satan. The great black dog he made his companion was thought his familiar, if not the Devil himself. In 1536, discouraged and broken in health, Agrippa died; and it was his pupil, the great Rhenish physi-

cian Jan Weyer, who wrote, though not till thirty years later, the book that first gave the witch-persecution effective check. Yet Agrippa, too, had listeners—among them Sebastian Franck; and, while Lutheran and Calvinist made it a part of their orthodoxy to vie in witch-hunting with their Papist foes, the Anabaptists were incredulous.

One other notable book and I am done. It was in this same year or just before it that a churchly astronomer, one Nicolaus Copernicus, put forth the booklet, his "little commentary" (*Commentariolus*), which first outlined his novel theory of the heavens. Though it found a hearing, even before the Pope, and stirred much curiosity, a dozen years had passed before he published more. His monograph was known to be complete; but, despite all urging, it was printed only in time to reach him on his death-bed. How far this was due to fear of the heresy-hunters can only be guessed—though there is food for guessing. But even the *Commentariolus* had set men thinking; and you will, I think, agree with me that nothing has in the long run proved more fatal to persecution for heresy than that demonstration that the earth is but a planet and the universe of theology far from sure.

So much, then, for my Liberals. To the conservatism of their day they were, you will admit, pretty "red."

SOCINIAN PROPAGANDA IN GERMANY THREE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

Crypto-Socinianism at Altdorf

EARL M. WILBUR

ANY one enough interested in early Unitarian history to track it to one of its remote haunts, and finding himself at Nuremberg with an afternoon at his disposal, might enjoy, as I did last summer, making an excursion to Altdorf. This is a tidy but stagnant little market-town of some 3,000 inhabitants, lying at the end of a branch railroad line eight or ten miles east of Nuremberg. The town has an unusually large and long market-place at its center, and at each end of this a massive tower and gate, which are about all that now remains of the old walls. At the farther edge of the town is its most notable building, a stately stone structure built around three sides of a court-yard, and now known as the Wichernhaus, an institution conducted by the *Innere Mission*, in which crippled youth are taught useful trades. It is this building that might most interest a Unitarian visitor historically inclined, for during several years early in the seventeenth century it sheltered in greatest secrecy a little nest of heretics whose adventurous story, since it has never so far as I know been told in English, I shall here relate.

Nuremberg in the first half-century of the Reformation, being a rich and proud city of no little consequence, was ambitious to possess a university of its own, rather than send its sons abroad for their higher education. Melancthon was appealed to, and with his advice in 1526 the first step was taken in the foundation of a gymnasium, which had a distinguished Rector and excellent teachers. Yet, instead of



ERNESTVS SONERVVS
Norimbergensis.

*Philosophia et Medicinæ Doctor. Ejusdemque Physi-
ces Professor Publicus in Academiâ Altorfina.*

Natus A. C. 1574. Tenatus 1612. J. 20. Sept.
W. P. Kilian sculpsit.



THE WICHERNHAUS AT ALTDORF
Die Nürnbergische Universität Altdorf

flourishing, the institution gradually declined and came to a premature end, and the city fathers concluded that a busy commercial city did not afford the suitable academic atmosphere. Hence, acting on the counsel of the erstwhile Rector, they determined to establish their school in some quieter town near by. Thus in 1575 the Nurembergers opened a new gymnasium in stately new buildings at Altdorf, which had now for two generations been a part of Nuremberg's domain. The Nuremberg Senate induced famous teachers to come to Altdorf, and the school sprang at once into fame; and as it offered a wide range of instruction in the four faculties, it was soon advanced to the status of an Academy, with the right to confer the Bachelor's and the Master's degrees. It attracted students not only from all parts of Germany, but also from foreign lands, conspicuous among these being Poland, and it was especially favored by the nobility. Notorious among these was an undisciplined young Baron from Bohemia, named Waldestein, or Wallenstein, whose later adventures Schiller celebrated in two of his dramas, and whose turbulent career of a few months at Altdorf was stained by homicide, and ended with his being "relegated." At a later period the philosopher Leibniz made his Doctor here in 1666.

In 1623 the Academy at Altdorf was again advanced, and became a University with the usual four faculties, although on account of the unsettled state of religion in that stormy period the Theological Faculty was not given degree privileges till toward the end of the century. At the same time the gymnasium was separated from the Academy and removed to Nuremberg. Altdorf had its due measure of teachers whose names are still remembered in the world of scholarship: Fabricius and Döderlein the theologians, Wagenseil the jurist, and Sturm the philosopher, to mention no more. It won distinction in philosophy, natural science, and medicine, and its laboratories, clinics, and botanical garden were celebrated.

The burghers of Nuremberg were proud of their nursling

institution, poured out their wealth upon it, sent their sons to it, and watched over it with solicitous care: and although it was properly called the University of Altdorf, yet it was to all intents and purposes the University of Nuremberg. Indeed, they liked to speak of it as *die Nürnbergische Universität Altdorf*. But its history was laid in troublous times. It began in the midst of the Thirty Years' War, and it ended in the midst of the Napoleonic Wars. Its internal life also was stormy, and conflicts between town and gown were frequent and serious. At length, after a hundred and twenty years, it was called upon to face ruinous competition from a new university opened at Erlangen, only a few miles from Nuremberg, with distinguished teachers and a lavish endowment. The number of students at Altdorf gradually fell off, the professors one by one withdrew, and in 1809 the University was closed and its library and equipment were transferred to Erlangen.¹ The original buildings remain, outwardly unchanged, but now long since devoted to other uses.

About 1589 there came to the new Academy at Altdorf a youth of fifteen whose story concerns us here. His name was Ernst Soner (or Sohner),² born 1572, the son of a Nuremberg merchant whom Maximilian II. had admitted to the nobility. He soon won distinction for his ability and his attainments, which lay equally in the two fields of Aristotelian philosophy and Medicine, received the Master's degree in 1595, and was the first to be granted an *aureum stipendium* offered to candidates in Medicine proposing to pursue their studies abroad. Taking under his guidance two young gentlemen's sons from Nuremberg, he set out on his travels, and after narrowly escaping both shipwreck and pestilence settled down first at Leiden, where his unusual scholarship presently won him the name of "the learned German." It was while

¹ For an account of the University of Altdorf, see G. A. Will, *Geschichte und Beschreibung der Nürnbergschen Universität Altdorf*. Altdorf, 1795.

² For the best sketch of Soner's life, see J. J. Baier, *Biographiae professorum medicinae in Academia Altdorfiana*. Nürnberg, 1728, pp. 26, 36.

he was at Leiden that there arrived from Poland two Socinian missionaries, Christopher Ostorod and Andrew Wojdowski, nominally for the purpose of superintending the studies of some young Poles entrusted to their oversight, but quite as much or more with a view to investigating the prospects for their faith in the free republic, and winning favor for it, for they brought with them a bale of Socinian books for distribution. It is they that are credited with having been the first to introduce Socinianism into Holland. By private conversations and by circulating their books they quietly sought to make converts; but the ever-watchful authorities of the Reformed Church soon got wind of this, had them called to account, and examined their books. The result was that their books were seized and ordered to be publicly burned as little better than Mohammedan, and they themselves were ordered to leave the country within ten days. But all this, however interesting in itself,¹ is another story. What is to the purpose here is the fact that, as perhaps the most important result of their brief sojourn in Holland, they made the acquaintance of Soner, formed an intimate and lasting friendship with him, and held correspondence with him as long as he lived. Thus we come to the source of Socinianism at Altdorf.

Leaving Leiden, and seeking to enrich his mind at other seats of learning and by wide travel, Soner spent some time at Oxford and at London, visited the main cities of France, and traveled a thousand miles in Italy, going as far as Naples and ending with the famous medical school at Padua. At length he returned to take his Doctor's degree at Basel in 1601, and then, after these six years of elaborate preparation, came home to Nuremberg at the age of twenty-eight and entered upon a highly successful practice. It was therefore not strange that when Professor Scherb of the Medical Faculty at Altdorf saw his end approaching a few years

¹ The most accessible account of their adventures in Holland is in J. C. van Slee, *Geschiedenis van het Socinianisme in de Nederlanden*, Haarlem, 1914; and W. J. Kühler, *Socinianisme in Nederland*, Leiden, 1912.

later he should have designated Soner as his successor. Thus in 1605 Soner became Professor of the Practice of Medicine, and also of Natural Philosophy, holding, under a custom which long prevailed at Altdorf, chairs in two faculties, and dividing his instruction between them.¹

Soner soon established a reputation as a popular teacher, and in both faculties his lecture-rooms were crowded. He is reported in his teaching to have been thorough, fresh, original, and independent of current traditions, and to have made much use of disputations in the training of his students. He was several times chosen Dean of the Philosophical Faculty, and in 1607-1608 he served his turn in the rotating office of Rector of the Academy. While it is true that he published a few small medical writings, he left no mark in that field, and his name is not mentioned in histories of Medicine. For, as was the case with Servetus, though he was by training and by profession a physician, and as such might have become distinguished, his deeper interests lay elsewhere, in Philosophy which he also professed, and in Theology which he ardently cultivated as an avocation. Whatever enduring influence he left, therefore, was in connection with his career as Professor of Philosophy. In connection with this he lectured, as his chair required, on not only the Physics but also the Logic and the Metaphysics of Aristotle, and in this field he was esteemed a matchless teacher. Even a generation after his death his contribution to the understanding of Aristotle continued to be so much valued that the orthodox Altdorf philosopher Felwinger edited from his manuscript two volumes of commentaries,² carefully "castigated" of any Socinian impurities. His career, however, was but brief, for after barely seven years of teaching he was carried off by a malignant disease in 1612, at the age of forty. He was extolled by the Rector of the

¹ cf. Will, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

² In *Librum Aristotelis de Interpretatione*, Altdorf, 1641. In *XII, libros Aristotelis commentarius*, Jena, 1657, 1666. For his minor philosophical writings, see *Philosophia Altdorfina, hoc est . . . Ernesti Soneri . . . disputationes philosophicæ . . . accesserunt aliquot Soneri orationes*, ed. J. P. Felwinger, Nürnberg, 1644.

Academy as *incomparabilis Philosophus et Medicus excellentissimus*.¹

On theological subjects of course one in Soner's position and holding his views could not safely publish anything. One little tract of his, however, has survived, published long after his time in free Holland, and entitling Universalism to claim him (has the claim ever been asserted?) as one of its earliest modern heralds.² Zeltner has also preserved for us the only letter of Soner's known to him, and the last six chapters of a Catechism in German, "composed with the greatest care, and of matchless clearness," as he observes, of which he possessed the whole manuscript.³ Sand in his *Bibliotheca Anti-trinitariorum*, followed by Bock, *Historia Anti-trinitariorum*, attributes to Soner a dozen or more other theological works, though all of them in manuscript. The fragment of his Catechism which we possess makes it clear that, as a true Socinian, Soner firmly held to the subordination of Christ, as a being whose power was derived from the Father;⁴ and that he repudiated any mathematical oneness of God and Christ; but for any further statement of his doctrinal position we have to rely mainly on the testimony of his contemporaries at Altdorf to whom he had to some extent expressed himself. His colleague, the thoroughly orthodox Professor Schopper, who had had frequent and intimate conversations with him, considered him an evangelical Christian; since he held so strictly to the authority of Scripture that he was wont to complain that on controverted questions so many persons appeal not to Scripture but to the Fathers and the Councils, whereas he considered that the opinions of men ought to be squared with the Word of

1 Zeltner, ut infra, p. 57.

2 First in Dutch translation, *Bewys dat de strafen der verdoemden*, etc., 1631. Later in the original Latin, *Demonstratio theologica et philosophica, quod æterna impiorum supplicia non arguunt Dei justitiam, sed injustitiam* (*In Fausti & Laelii Socini, item Ernesti Sonneri Tractatus theologicæ*, pp. 36-69), Eleutheropolis (Amsterdam), 1654.

3 Zeltner, pp. 819-858. Zeltner erroneously thinks (p. 48) that this was the basis of the Racovian Catechism, which has in fact quite another pedigree. In choice of topics and form of doctrine it is unmistakably Socinian, but the literary relation, if any, was more likely in the other direction; for the Racovian Catechism was published in Polish in 1605, the very year in which Soner habilitated at Altdorf, and a Minor Catechism in German in the same year. The date of Soner's Catechism is not given.

4 Zeltner, p. 852f.

God rather than contrariwise. Moreover he had frequently said that he heartily believed that Christ was true God and man, and as such he adored him in one person; while he heartily detested those who in any way detracted from the majesty of the Son of God, to worship and adore whom no devotion of mortals could be sufficient. He died with a prayer to Christ upon his lips.¹

Now all this certainly sounds orthodox enough, especially when judged by the standards of modern Unitarianism; and it was convincing to those who, trusting him, were his sincere apologists, and who even when his secret heresies had been clearly proved urged that he must then have changed his views toward the end of his life. Yet those that took account not only of the beliefs that Soner had thus professed, but also of those that he had omitted to profess, might have noted, as some did, that he had carefully abstained from acknowledging the Trinity, or the supreme and eternal Godhead of Christ. In fact, he had expressed only such beliefs as were accepted by the Socinianism of his time, which ascribed to Christ a certain divinity, and made the worship of Christ the very touch-stone of true Christian faith; while the Socinians themselves without hesitation claimed him as one of their number.² He himself summed up the practical essence of the Christian religion in the statement that the main point in our religion is not knowledge of profound matters, not deep understanding of mysteries, but a reverent and blameless life, and a diligent observance of the commands of God; and this alone he instilled and urged upon all, deeming that this was the only way leading to the heavenly country.³

The theological atmosphere at Altdorf was rigidly orthodox, and so strongly Lutheran that even the reading of Calvin's works, in which some of the students indulged themselves, was regarded as a dangerous flirtation with heresy. In such an environment Soner had every inducement

¹ Zeltner, pp. 57-59.

² Zeltner, p. 60f.

³ Zeltner, p. 310.

to keep close the Socinian views which he had imbibed at Leiden. But it may easily be believed that among the students who fell under the spell of his influence there were some who had stumbled at the intricate dogmas of the Athanasian Creed and the Augsburg Confession, and would be attracted by a doctrine that was much simpler in statement, appeared to be better supported by Scripture, and laid its emphasis much more on devoutness and a godly life than on speculative beliefs. With such he might venture to speak more freely, though with his classes in general he exercised the most prudent caution. His method in his public lectures on Aristotle's Logic and Metaphysics was to illustrate philosophical problems by examples taken from the field of theology, and thus he could insinuate his views without arousing suspicion. In his *collegia privatissima*, however, where he met only one or two pupils at a time, he could speak with less reserve when it seemed safe to do so.

Into soil thus prepared, seeds were presently dropped from other sources. Soner was in secret correspondence with the Polish Brethren; and as Altdorf had from the first been more or less visited by Polish students (there being no Protestant university in Poland), some of them now began to arrive bearing letters of introduction from the brethren at Raków.¹ These brought books from the Raków press which were quietly passed round with a view to winning converts, and each convert made became a new missionary. Finally, the regular academic disputations furnished an open forum on which, under the form of debate, ticklish questions might be raised or heresies defended, for the sake of practice

1. Zeltner gives (p. 36) a dozen or so of sample names, of which he drily remarks, "*vel describenti molesta, audituque horrida nomina*"—names hard for one even to write down, and horrid to hear. The number of Polish students at Altdorf has, however, been much overestimated. During the first seventeen years of the century an average of about five students a year matriculated from Poland and Lithuania, and during Soner's time the number was even smaller. There is no clear reason for thinking that more than a small proportion of these was of Socinian origin, and the number of Unitarians from Transylvania was negligible. (See E. von Steinmeyer, *Matrikel der Universität Altdorf*, Würzburg, 1912). It is worth noting, however, that one of the Poles, Adam Sieninski, son of the Palatine of Podolia, was chosen Honorary Rector for the year 1609–1610, according to a custom by which this compliment was sometimes paid to students of great distinction (cf. Will, op. cit., p. 38). Sieninski was of the family whose head was proprietor of Raków, and the most generous patron of Socinian causes.

in dialectic skill. The mysteries of the Trinity and similar dogmas resting more upon tradition and faith than upon reason and the clear teaching of Scripture provided favorite topics for logical fencing and hair-splitting discussion. One student (Respondent) would undertake to defend a doctrinal thesis; two others (Opponents) would attack it and try to expose flaws in the Respondent's reasoning; while a professor in the given faculty (Praeses) would hold the debaters to the point, and at the end might sum up the whole, as well as pick up any dropped stitches and correct any erroneous views. It is obvious that in the course of such disputations many heretical views might be brought forward without too great risk, and advantage was often taken of the opportunity. Nor, as later became evident, did the Praeses always succeed in defending the faith or confuting error in a way convincing to all those whose doubts had been raised.

Thus Socinianism at Altdorf quietly spread unobserved for seven years, and when at length Soner died untimely his orthodoxy had never once come under suspicion. Underneath the surface, however, much more had been going on than had as yet been suspected. The next stage of this study must therefore deal with some of the individual actors in the drama, and with their organization into a secret brotherhood with a missionary purpose. The earliest Socinian known to have come from Poland to Altdorf, and one of the leaders in promoting the spread of his faith there, was Michael Gittich, whose father had been a Protestant refugee from Venice. His schooling had been among the Unitarians at Kolozsvár, and later in the Socinian Academy at Raków, whence he came to Altdorf in 1607, the year in which Soner was Rector, and probably enough in consequence of some understanding with him. He stayed at Altdorf about two years studying philosophy, and was greatly admired for his studious habits and his irreproachable life; but when it was at length discovered that he had been persistently advocating the Socinian doctrine in private conversation or discussions, and that he wholly denied the deity of Christ, and argued

against his vicarious satisfaction, he was ordered to leave. He was ordained by the Socinians at Raków in 1611, and was for many years pastor of their church at Nowogrodek in Lithuania, where he died in 1654.¹

At Altdorf Gittich soon formed an intimate friendship with a German student, Johann Krell (Johannes Crellius as he later always subscribed himself) from Helmetzheim in Franconia, who was destined for his wide learning, his reputation as a teacher, and his voluminous writings to win much renown. He was already a favorite pupil of Soner. During four or five years he devoted himself to imbibing and spreading Socinian teachings, and he made several important converts among the German students, yet so quietly that when he suddenly and secretly left Altdorf soon after Soner's death it occasioned general surprise. Perhaps he had reason to fear that his heresy might now be discovered. At all events, he fled alone and on foot to Poland, where he was hospitably received, and at once joined the church at Raków. Although he never saw his native land again, he continued as long as he lived to acknowledge it by signing himself Johannes Crellius Francus. He was a man of massive learning in both biblical scholarship and philosophy, and was soon made Professor of Greek in the Academy at Raków; and he was shortly afterwards elected Rector of the Academy and pastor of the church, where he preached in Latin, German, and Polish. Worn out by incessant labors he succumbed to a fever and died in 1633 at the early age of forty-three. His published writings fill four massive volumes of the *Bibliotheca Fratrum Polonorum*, and include not only commentaries on most of the books of the New Testament which mark an epoch in the history of exegesis, and are still quoted with respect in Meyer's commentaries, but also several works of much influence in doctrinal theology and in ethics, many of all these being translated into Dutch, German, French, or English. He was the greatest scholar in the history of Socinianism. His grandson Samuel (1660-1747), author of

¹ See Zeltner, pp. 78-93, 226-229; Bock, *Historia Antitrinitariorum*, pp. 372-400.

numerous books that attracted marked attention in their time, enjoyed intimate relations with distinguished persons in Holland and England, and had two sons who were among the first settlers of the American colony of Georgia, and are the only Socinians known to have come to the new world.¹

Of all the Socinians at Altdorf the most zealous and active was undoubtedly Martin Ruar, another German, who did not arrive from his Holstein home until the movement was well under way, in 1611, only a year before Soner's death. He was distinguished for his talents and eloquence, a poet, a fine linguist, and a scholar of wide range. As a student of Philosophy he soon became an intimate pupil of Soner, and by him was tactfully led along until his theology had become thoroughly transformed. He had singular success in making converts, and after making a secret journey to Raków, and having there been formally received into the brotherhood of the church, he returned to Germany under appointment as a Socinian missionary, and as such circulated Socinian books, and by his letters sought to confirm his scattered converts. He remained at Altdorf three years, was leader of the Socinian group there, and at length removed to Strassburg to pursue his mission in a new field. While he was there, the Socinian movement at Altdorf fell under investigation, and Ruar was found to have been so deeply implicated in it that reports of his course there were forwarded to the university authorities at Strassburg. An investigation ensued, and he thought it prudent to take his leave without delay. Henceforth he led a restless and wandering life, traveled extensively, was offered a professorship at Cambridge, and returning to Poland was appointed Rector of the Academy at Raków; but soon tiring of scholastic life he resigned and spent several years more in travel as companion to young Polish gentlemen, finally settling down to the care of congregations in and near Danzig, where he died in 1657.²

¹ See Zeltner, pp. 188-198; Bock, pp. 116-203.

² See Zeltner, pp. 94-150; 316-324; Bock, pp. 713-735.

The three persons spoken of above were the foremost leaders of the Socinian group at Altdorf, which seems first and last to have included about twenty. Far from being a company of depraved and abandoned heretics, bent chiefly on corrupting the faith of those whom they might allure into their net, they seem rather to have been, like the early Socinians in general, a company of primitive Christians and conscientious puritans, aiming on the one hand to hold the New Testament faith in its purest and simplest form as contrasted with the changes which they felt had been introduced by the Creeds and Councils, and to commend it to others as far as was possible in such an environment; and on the other hand, in the conduct of daily life to live literally as Christ and the Apostles had commanded. To this end they were accustomed to hold private religious meetings in one another's rooms for mutual encouragement; and as they observed that many of their fellow-students, though living evil lives, yet partook of the Lord's Supper, they withdrew from such association with them, abstained from communion in church, and instead observed the sacrament privately in their own lodgings, following the rite as practiced at Raków.¹ It is noteworthy that, bitterly as they were judged for spreading their heretical doctrines, and for the stealth which they of necessity had to use for self-protection in doing so, their critics have left on record nothing but praise for their devout piety and their exemplary conduct.

As a safeguard against their being discovered and betrayed, the members of this secret religious fraternity (for such it practically was), in view of their having to separate and to carry on correspondence with one another, adopted a secret code. It was planned by Gittich, after a custom not uncommon at the time, and it was not supposed to be used always and everywhere but only under urgent necessity and in serious circumstances. It contained some eighty names of persons, places, and parties, and is still extant, together

¹ Zeltner, pp. 128f, 491f.

with the identifications.¹ Zeltner expands this list, by his comments, into an extensive biographical and geographical lexicon of Crypto-Socinianism, as the movement came afterwards to be known.²

It was not in the nature of the case that such a movement should continue indefinitely without becoming discovered or suspected, and not long after Soner's death such rumors began to be whispered about concerning the spread of Socinian views among the students, and Soner's connection with them, that when his intimate friend and late pupil Richter proposed to honor him at Nuremberg in the customary panegyric oration, permission for the use of the cathedral was for a time withheld; and when the oration was finally delivered it was noted by some that while Soner's scholarship, his character, and his piety were extolled, his particular religious views were passed over very lightly with general statements.³ In these circumstances, the position of the Crypto-Socinians at Altdorf steadily grew more precarious. Gittich had indeed already been detected and sent away in 1611, and Crellius had deemed it prudent to steal away within a month after Soner's death. By 1614, though no open charges of heresy were yet made, suspicions had arisen against some of the students at Altdorf. The bolder spirits therefore now formed a plan to scatter to other universities in order to make converts in fresh fields, especially in universities where there was most opposition to Socinianism and they might have an opportunity in the disputations to maintain the Socinian point of view. They then left Altdorf one or two at a time during the year 1614, Ruar going to Strassburg, as we have seen, and others to Jena, Wittenberg, Helmstädt, and Rostock, where their efforts met various success.

In the autumn of 1615 reports of what their former students were doing reached the Curators of the Academy at Altdorf and spurred them into action. They came out from Nuremberg, and calling together the students who were

¹ Zeltner, pp. 151-157.

² Zeltner, pp. 151-382.

³ Zeltner, pp. 53, 54; Baier, p. 31.

at all suspected of heresy put them under examination. All but one strenuously denied having anything to do with Photinianism (as it was called, for the name Socinian had not yet become current). Nicholas Dümmler alone confessed without shuffling that he could not believe in the Trinity as taught in the Church, and gave numerous reasons for his stand, disputing long and hotly with the Nuremberg theologians. When he could not be brought to yield, he was required to put his doubts in writing, which he did at full length. It was hoped that he would soon come to a better mind, and he was invited to appear at Nuremberg a few days later for further discussion. Instead he suddenly took flight and made his way to Poland, where he was ordained in 1618 at the same synod with Crellius, became pastor at Meseritz, and is thought to have died a few years later. At Altdorf, as he failed to obey the formal summons to appear, he was in due time expelled from the Academy and branded with infamy as faithless and incorrigible.¹

Of the students who left Altdorf to prosecute a mission in other universities, two deserve special mention on account of their dramatic history, and because their names became so prominent in the history of Crypto-Socinianism. Joachim Peuschel and Johann Vogel were students from Nuremberg who came to Altdorf in the time of Soner and proved themselves able scholars. Though they did not come under Soner's immediate influence, they were both intimate with Crellius and Ruar. They joined the Socinian group, attended its religious meetings, partook of its sacrament, and were diligent in seeking out Scripture proofs of the Socinian teaching. Peuschel was, after Ruar, the leader of the group, and they were both ardent Socinians. Vogel left Altdorf together with Ruar early in 1614, having received a certificate of honorable dismissal. After visiting several other places he settled at Jena, where he read theology assiduously, and also debated so often and so hotly with Professor Græwer in the public disputations that he had among the students the general

¹ See Zeltner, pp. 203-207, 423-428, 526-530, 1119-1157; Bock, p. 322f.

reputation of being a Photinian. After four months, therefore, he thought it unsafe to stay longer, and took advantage of an opportunity to accompany Ruar to Poland. There he was cordially welcomed, and was formally received into the brotherhood. Returning to missionary activity at Wittenberg, he embraced every opportunity publicly or in private to spread his faith, and made not a few converts without being discovered. Peuschel had meantime succeeded him at Jena.

By the summer of 1615 disquieting rumors began to reach the ears of the Senate at Nuremberg, and they centred mostly about Peuschel. As he was studying abroad at public expense, under pledge to hold the received faith, and was still a citizen of Nuremberg, he was asked to give a candid reply to twelve questions as to his religious beliefs. His reply, which might have been brief and to the point, was diffuse and evasive, for he had been coached and confirmed by Ruar, who was now at Strassburg. Similar questions were put to Vogel at Wittenberg, and with similar result. Efforts to bring the two to a right mind through conversations with theologians having proved futile, it was decided early the next year to recall them home; and in order that they might not escape as Dümmler had done, the Senate requested that they be taken into custody. Peuschel was thrown into the University *carcer* at Jena, his lodgings were searched, and many books of Socinians and Servetus were found, as well as a quantity of cryptic letters. Vogel was lodged in the public jail at Wittenberg, but little was found in his lodgings. As soon as the necessary formalities could be complied with, a Syndic came and took the two under guard and in chains to Nuremberg, where they were placed in the tower about the middle of April, together with two others whose heresies had attracted less notice, Cornelius Marcus and Christopher Uffinger.

The two were at once put under examination and frankly told their story: how Crellius and others had led them astray, what books had been given them to read (and that

the more eagerly after their professor had prohibited the reading of such books), what meetings they had held, how they had celebrated the Lord's Supper, and how all rooted back in Soner. Meantime steps were taken by the Curators of the Academy to stamp out such heresy as still remained at Altdorf. One or two students more were put under arrest; the rest were given a chance to clear themselves by surrendering any Socinian books they might have. A large number of these were brought together,¹ and were burnt in the market-place in the presence of the academical and civil officers, the students, and a great crowd of citizens and visitors, as a part of the public celebration of the Academy's anniversary. One of the bystanders declared that the flames rose high enough to be seen from even Poland and Holland—a statement which may be taken for its symbolic value. The herald denounced the wickedness, and ordered all that favored or had taken part in it to quit the country, and that at once. A few Polish Socinians were still at Altdorf, and asked leave to remain on condition of good behavior; and some indulgence was reluctantly granted them, since they were nobles of high rank. But ere long they departed, and the Academy was at last purged of its long infection. Indeed, from this time on, scarcely a further trace is found of any Polish students at Altdorf.² All the other suspects were now easily brought back to the way of evangelical truth.

The theologians of Nuremberg now applied themselves to the task of converting their prisoners. To this end they prepared, in both Latin and German, fifty "homologetic Aphorisms," or Theses, in opposition to Photinian errors, to be used as a basis of the examination, and these were then discussed in the presence of the Curators of the Academy and the theologians in fifteen formal meetings, protracted from August 21 to October 18. Peuschel and Vogel, examined separately, contested every step of the argument with the greatest obstinacy; but with ripe theologians de-

¹ See Zeltner, pp. 513-517 for a partial list.

² Zeltner, pp. 522-526.

bating abstruse dogmas against immature students there could never be uncertainty as to the outcome. Even if only dialectical and scriptural methods were employed,¹ their imprisonment itself furnished an irrefutable argument which could never be long out of mind; and the whole discussion must have had something of the character of a theological "third degree." Thus they gave way step by step until with ten sessions the work seemed to be done. The prisoners were then ordered after a few days to appear, make a public recantation, subscribe the laws of the Nuremberg church, and take a solemn oath. At this last requirement they balked, for it was a marked characteristic of Socinianism to take seriously the command of Jesus, "Swear not at all." Apparently the work must all be done over again. Pueschel asked leave to return home for further reflection; but the clergy, remembering Dümmler, doubted his sincerity, grew severe, and darkly hinted at invoking the penalty of the Roman law (burning at the stake). Discussion was resumed, but Poeschel realized that it was of no use to prolong it. At the next session he unexpectedly gave in, confessed his errors, and promised to meet all the conditions imposed. He took the oath and subscribed the laws, and the case was at an end. Vogel's remaining scruples were soon disposed of, and he too took the oath and subscribed the fifty Aphorisms. Uffinger, as being relatively innocent, had evidently been early discharged from custody; while Marcus, having been easily persuaded to adjure his heresies with due solemnity, was restored to communion, and eventually became Professor of Theology at Altdorf.

Meantime the Polish Brethren at Raków, who were accustomed to follow their scattered members with solicitous care, were apprised of what was taking place, and were much distressed at the plight of Poeschel and Vogel as two who had been duly received into their fellowship. Therefore they first sent a courier to Nuremberg to see what could be done,

¹ Zeltner categorically denies, in the face of Socinian accusations, that the imprisonment was unduly rigorous, or that threats and terrors were used; on the contrary, only serious admonitions when there seemed to be equivocation. *Op. cit.*, pp. 500-508.

and later sent two envoys to request the Nuremberg Senate to release the two prisoners. But alas! before they arrived the case was at an end, and nothing could be done.

After being duly confirmed and prepared for the event, Peuschel and Vogel proceeded to make their public recantation, which took place early in 1617 before a great crowd from both Nuremberg and Altdorf. Vogel's oration was on the divinity of Christ, which he defended on the customary grounds. Peuschel, having apologized for his temporary aberration, likewise defended the dogma of the Satisfaction of Christ. Having thus made his peace, Vogel now withdrew from the field of theology and embraced the calling of a teacher, becoming at length Rector of St. Sebald's School at Nuremberg, where he lived to a ripe old age. Peuschel entered the ministry and became pastor of St. Jacob's at Nuremberg, where he was carried off by the plague at the early age of forty. Both were supposed to be living in peaceful conformity to the end of their days; though how far a recantation obtained under such conditions was an expression of sincere conviction is a question more easily raised than answered. It is of record, however, that not long after his recantation Marcus was exchanging letters with his old friend Crellius, and that Peuschel not long before his death had friendly correspondence with a Socinian convert whom Ruar had won at Strassburg; and that when the Calvinists had exiled the Remonstrants from Holland, he wrote a letter of sympathy to them at Friedrichstadt.¹ The missionary efforts in the other universities must now have come to an end, for we hear no more of them.

Thus ended a gallant attempt, and so far as is known the only concerted and systematic attempt, to propagate Socinian doctrine in Germany by making converts among theological

¹ The whole story of the mission after the Socinians scattered from Altdorf, the arrest and trial, and the recantation, is given at incredible length by Zeltner, pp. 383-814. The orations of Vogel and Peuschel in recantation were published at Nuremberg in 1617 in two editions, and are reprinted in Zeltner, pp. 889-933. A refutation by the tireless Socinian controversialist, Valentin Smalcius, was published at Raków in the same year, and is also reprinted by Zeltner, pp. 938-997. Finally, the Confessions of faith submitted by Peuschel, Vogel and Dumler, in response to request from the authorities when their orthodoxy was first called in question, are given by Zeltner, pp. 998, 1071, 1119ff.

students in the universities. It was a scheme apparently conceived and planned, and certainly carried on, by youth in their twenties, of brilliant talents, burning zeal, and with that reckless daring which goes with inexperience. Their effort was of course from the start foredoomed to fail in an age when nearly a century of theological controversy had sharpened issues to the last degree, and the guardians of the faith were keenly alert to detect anything which might weaken the defences which they had with such pains erected, and when the secular arm was still prepared upon occasion to punish heresy as a crime. Nor can they have planned and sustained the attempt against such odds at all, save out of a firm persuasion that the doctrine they held was the undoubted truth of God, and a naive faith that, despite all obstacles raised by man, it was therefore sure to prevail.

Thus the frontal attack upon the orthodox dogma was soon repulsed. If in the course of a few generations more not a few of the Protestant theological faculties in the German universities came to shelter and even to honor teachers whose positions went far beyond those held by the early Socinians, scriptural literalists as they were, and stout champions of the scriptural Apostles' Creed as against the non-scriptural "corruptions" of the Nicene and Athanasian Creeds, it was because the authorities on which the orthodox dogmas relied for support had in the meantime been weakened or undermined by biblical criticism and the study of the evolution of Christian doctrine. Yet in the former of these fields Socinianism too played no mean part through the newer and more rational exegesis employed in the New Testament commentaries of Crellius, himself, as we have seen, one of the Altdorf Crypto-Socinians.

Well over a hundred years after the events narrated above, Gustav Georg Zeltner, the learned Professor of Theology and Oriental Languages at Altdorf,¹ having become interested in the matter, investigated it with characteristic

¹ See the autobiographical sketch in his *Vitæ Theologorum Altorphinorum*, Nuremberg, 1722.

German thoroughness, followed it out in all its ramifications and connections to the remotest detail, and composed a history of it, fully documented and enriched with a wealth of quotations and appendices. For some reason he was unwilling to publish the work in his lifetime;¹ but by some accident the manuscript escaped from his hands and by devious ways fell unexpectedly into those of a sometime Altdorf law student who at once recognized its unusual interest, and overcoming all scruples as to the propriety of his act put the work to press, intending it as an antidote for any liable to become infected with Socinianism.² It is a forbidding, bulky Latin quarto of more than one thousand, two hundred pages; and as if this were not enough, the editor added to it over seven hundred pages more, containing a reprint of two "centuries" of select letters written by Ruar and some forty others, rich in contemporary accounts of what was going on among the Socinians in the first half of the seventeenth century. The whole volume makes a precious mine of materials for early Unitarian history, full of interest and reward for any good Latinist who has the time and patience to explore it. It is largely from this volume that the present study has been extracted and condensed.

1 One cannot but wonder why, for it is a work ostensibly unfriendly to the movement of which it treats, and the author while reprinting a part of Soner's Catechism accompanies it by a brief refutation. And yet it can not escape notice how frequently he speaks in complimentary terms of the young heretics who move through his pages, and that he gives as full a presentation of the Socinian side of the case as Socinians themselves could fairly have asked, even to Smalcus's Refutation of Vogel and Peuschel, and Smalcus's rather irrelevant Diary. Is it possible that he had a partial sympathy with the Socinian position, and was willing under the cover of a history to bring it freshly to attention, yet shrank from incurring the criticism which some who saw beneath the surface might bring upon him?

2 G. G. Zeltner, *Historia Crypto-Socinismi altorfinae quondam, academiae infesti arcana . . . accesserunt praeter alia Valentini Smalcii Diarium Vitae . . . et Martini Ruari Epistolarum centuriae duae, etc.* Leipzig, 1729. See the preface.

RECORDS OF THE ANNUAL MEETING, 1932

The Thirty-second Annual Meeting of the Unitarian Historical Society was held in King's Chapel on Thursday, May 26, 1932, at 11 A. M., the President, Dr. Christopher R. Eliot, presiding.

The record of the Thirty-first Annual Meeting was read and approved.

The Treasurer, Mr. Harrie H. Dadmun, read his report, showing a balance of \$149.26 in the Treasury, and the sum of \$500 in the Life Membership Fund, which was accepted.

The Librarian, Mrs. George F. Patterson, read her report, stressing the growing importance of the Library of the Association for biographical and historical research, its present needs and future possibilities, and noting among the most important accessions the gift of a file of *Unity* from a daughter of Rev. William C. Gannett, and by deposit the record-books of the Massachusetts Convention of Congregational Ministers from 1880 to 1928.

Dr. John Carroll Perkins reported for the Publication Committee, describing the new issue of the Proceedings of the Society, Vol. II, Part 2, ready for distribution to members.

Dr. Francis A. Christie reported for the Committee on the Prize Essays. The Society through its Board of Directors offered a prize of fifty dollars for an historical essay, on a topic selected from a prescribed list of subjects, to the students of the Harvard Theological School, the Meadville Theological School, and the Pacific Unitarian School. The prize was won by Arthur Newell Moore of the Meadville Theological School on the subject "Theodore Parker's Protest against the Capitalistic Industrialization of New England."

Dr. Henry Wilder Foote reported that the Faustus Socinus Fund had reached a sum, approximately, of \$1800, and spoke of the efforts of Dr. Earl M. Wilbur, who is now in Poland, to complete the monument, with the permission of the Polish government. This elicited some remarks by Dr. Perkins on the design of the monument and the quality of the stone to be used.

The President reported and read the authorization given by the Society, to Dr. Wilbur, enabling him to proceed with the work of erecting and completing this monument.

Dr. Foote spoke of the long search for the missing records of the Massachusetts Convention of Congregational Ministers before 1880, and of the great importance of the preservation of similar material.

The President spoke of his consulting, at the Massachusetts Historical Society in connection with his researches relating to the Boston Association of Ministers, a manuscript volume containing a record of the meetings of an Association of Boston and Cambridge ministers, organized in 1690, which was modelled upon a ministers' association in Cornwall, England, the rules and early records of which, 1655-1659, are also in this volume. He also instanced the fact that he has been able to discover very little to verify the generally accepted tradition that the beginning and development of the Boston Public Garden were due to the efforts of Charles Barnard more than to any one else. He would be grateful for further information.

Miss Harriet E. Johnson called attention to the serious loss of the early records of the Irish Presbyterian Church in Long Lane, the predecessor of the Arlington Street Church, and appealed to her hearers for clues which may lead to the discovery of its papers and records before 1787, which would be helpful to her in preparing her history of that Church.

Rev. Charles A. Place then presented an interesting preliminary report listing and describing in detail the interiors and exteriors of Unitarian Church buildings erected before

1830, showing that few had carefully preserved their ancient features.

It was voted that the Board of Directors be requested to appoint a committee of five to continue the study of Church buildings outlined by Mr. Place.

The Nominating Committee, Rev. Mr. Auer, Rev. Mr. Jones, and Rev. Mr. Graves, reported the following persons to serve as Officers and Directors of the Society for the ensuing year, and they were duly elected:

Rev. Christopher R. Eliot, LL.D., President,
Rev. Charles E. Park, D.D., Vice-President,
Rev. Henry Wilder Foote, D.D., Honorary Vice-President,
Rev. Earl M. Wilbur, D.D., Honorary Vice-President,
Julius H. Tuttle, Secretary,
Harrie H. Dadman, Treasurer,
Mrs. George F. Patterson, Librarian,

and the following Directors for three years:

Edwin J. Lewis, Jr.,
Miss Harriet E. Johnson.

The President briefly expressed his appreciation of the honor conferred by the election, and also the earnest hope that the new year would be one of great success. He called attention to the formation of a new Unitarian Historical Society in the Western Conference, with headquarters at Chicago, through the efforts of one of our Directors, Rev. Charles H. Lyttle of the Meadville Theological School.

The President then introduced Dr. George Lincoln Burr, of Cornell University, Ithaca, N. Y., who gave an able and exhaustive address on "Liberty and Liberals Four Hundred Years Ago."

The President afterward referred to the great loss which the Society had sustained in the death of two of its members, Rev. Charles William Wendte, D.D., and Prof. William Wallace Fenn, D.D. Dr. Wendte was one of the earliest members of the Society and a loyal supporter of its work from the beginning. His interest in Unitarian history and traditions

was not in traditions and history as such merely, but as the foundation upon which the Church of today stands, the soil from which it has grown, and its abiding source of inspiration for the present and future. We are indebted to Dr. Wendte not only for his loyal support, but for many gifts of valuable books and pamphlets and for an example of enthusiastic devotion to Truth, Religious Freedom, International Cooperation and Goodwill. Prof. Fenn was a special student of New England religious history, its churches and leaders. He knew this field as no other in our fellowship. The Society is indebted to him for three of its ablest addresses: "How the Schism Came," "The Farewell Address of John Robinson," and "Dr. Sylvester Judd, Unitarian Churchman in Maine." Prof. Fenn's friendship and ideals of scholarship were invaluable.

The President appointed Mr. Gorham Dana to audit the Treasurer's accounts and his delayed report is entered here: "Complying with your request I have looked over the accounts of the Unitarian Historical Society and find them in excellent condition. The accounts appear to be properly cast and there are endorsed checks to account for all expenditures."

JULIUS H. TUTTLE,
Secretary.

LIST OF ANNUAL ADDRESSES DELIVERED BEFORE THE UNITARIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY 1901—1933

The earliest meetings of the Society were held in Channing Hall in the building of the American Unitarian Association, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, and were informal in character. Since 1904 the Annual Meeting has been regularly held in King's Chapel, Boston, except in 1923, when it was held in King's Chapel Parish House, and in 1930 when it was held in Hale Chapel, at the First Church of Boston. The list of speakers and their subjects is as follows:

- May 23, 1901 Brief addresses on Rev. Samuel Willard, D.D., Rev. Cyrus Bartol, D.D., and Rev. Alexander Young, D.D., by Rev. C. E. Park, Rev. George W. Solley, Rev. E. E. Hale, Rev. S. B. Stewart, and Rev. Edward J. Young.
- May 29, 1902 Prof. T. G. Masaryk, Prague, Bohemia.
"The Los von Rom Movement in Austria."
- May 21, 1903 Rev. Alfred Altherr, Basle, Switzerland.
"The Origin and Growth of the Liberal Church in Switzerland."
- May 26, 1904 Edwin D. Mead, Esq., Boston.
"The Relation of the Unitarian Fathers to the Peace Movement in America."
Rev. C. W. Wendte, Boston.
"Laelius and Faustus Socinus."
- May 25, 1905 Rev. Edward Everett Hale, Boston.
"The Fort Palmer Episode and other Unitarian Memoirs."
- May 24, 1906 Rev. John Carroll Perkins, Portland, Maine.
"The Part of the Pioneers."

- May 23, 1907 Rev. C. E. Park, Boston.
"Tablets and Memorials in our Churches."
- May 28, 1908 Rev. James De Normandie, Roxbury.
"Some Eminent Unitarians."
- May 27, 1909 Rev. Bradley Gilman, Canton.
"Holmes as a Religious Teacher."
- May 26, 1910 Rev. H. G. Spaulding, Boston.
"Harvard College Forty Years Ago, and the Old Harvard Divinity School."
- May 25, 1911 Rev. C. E. Park, Boston.
"History of Ordination and Installation Practices."
- May 23, 1912 Rev. Henry Wilder Foote, Cambridge.
"The Harvard School of Hymnody."
 See "Transactions of the Unitarian Historical Society of Great Britain," Vol. III, Part 2, October, 1924.
- May 22, 1913 Rev. James De Normandie, Roxbury.
"History of the Harvard Church in Charlestown."
- May 28, 1914 Rev. James De Normandie, Roxbury.
"The Brattle Street Church, Boston."
 See "Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society," Vol. 47, pp 223 to 231, entitled "The Manifesto Church."
- May 27, 1915 Rev. Charles Graves, Albany, N. Y.
"An Early Unitarian Outpost."
 See "The Christian Register" June 24, 1915, pp. 584-586 and July 1, pp. 608-611, also "Reprint" by Geo. H. Ellis Co., 1915.
- May 28, 1916 Hon. Winslow Warren, Dedham.
"The Value of Contemporary Opinion."
 See "Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society, Vol. 49, pp. 349-356.
- May 25, 1917 Rev. C. E. Park, Boston.
"Possibilities of Beauty in the Congregational Order."
 See "American Journal of Theology," Vol. XXIII, No. 1, January, 1919.
- May 23, 1918 Rev. G. L. Chaney, Salem.
"The Hollis Street Church, Boston."
 See "The Christian Register," Nov. 28, 1918, p. 1134; Dec. 5, pp. 1166-7; Dec. 12, pp. 1191-2; December 12, pp. 1215-6.

- May 22, 1919 Rev. Charles H. Lyttle, Brooklyn, N. Y.
"The Pentecost of Unitarianism."
 A study of Channing's Baltimore Sermon of 1819. Published for the Unitarian Historical Society by The Beacon Press, Boston, 1920.
- May 27, 1920 Professor W. W. Fenn, Cambridge.
"The Farewell Address of John Robinson."
- May 26, 1921 Professor Ephraim Emerton, Cambridge.
"The Unitarian Debt to Orthodoxy."
- May 25, 1922 Rev. W. G. Eliot, Jr., Portland, Oregon.
"The Early Days of Unitarianism on the Pacific Coast."
- May 24, 1923 Professor Waldo S. Pratt, Hartford, Conn.
"The Earliest New England Music."
 See "Proceedings of the Unitarian Historical Society," Vol. I, Part II, 1928.
- May 22, 1924 Dr. Kenneth B. Murdock, Cambridge.
"Notes on Increase and Cotton Mather."
 See "Proceedings of the Unitarian Historical Society," Vol. I, Part I, 1925.
- March 19, 1925 (Special Meeting)
 Rev. R. Nicol Cross, Hampstead, London.
"Historical Sketch of British Unitarianism."
- May 12, 1925 Professor W. W. Fenn, Cambridge.
"How the Schism Came."
 See "Proceedings of the Unitarian Historical Society," Vol. I, Part I, 1925.
- May 27, 1926 Mr. Edwin J. Lewis, Jr., Boston.
"The Churches of Boston in 1860."
 See "Proceedings of the Unitarian Historical Society," Vol. I, Part II, 1928.
- May 26, 1927 Professor W. W. Fenn, Cambridge.
"Dr. Sylvester Judd, Unitarian Churchman in Maine."
- May 24, 1928 Professor Francis A. Christie.
"Theodore Parker and Modern Theology."
- May 23, 1929 Rev. Thomas H. Billings, Salem, Mass.
"Early History of the First Church in Salem, Mass."
 Miss Harriet E. Johnson, Boston.
"Early History of Arlington Street Church, Boston."

- May 22, 1930 Rev. Charles E. Park, Boston.
"The First Four Churches of Massachusetts Bay."
 See "Proceedings of the Unitarian Historical Society," Vol. II, Part I, 1931.
- May 21, 1931 Rev. Rögnvaldur Petursson, Winnipeg, Manitoba.
"The Development of Liberal Religion in Iceland."
 Rev. George F. Patterson, Boston.
"The Rise and Progress of Icelandic Unitarian Churches in the United States and Canada."
 Rev. Amandus Norman, Hanska, Minn.
"Kristofer Janson, as Man, Poet, and Religious Reformer."
 See "Proceedings of the Unitarian Historical Society," Vol. II, Part II.
- May 25, 1933 Dr. George Lincoln Burr, Ithaca, N. Y.
"Liberals and Liberty Four Hundred Years Ago."
 Rev. Earl M. Wilbur
"Socinian Propaganda in Germany 300 Years Ago."
 See "Proceedings of the Unitarian Historical Society," Vol. III, Part I.

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